Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

ACCOUNT OF THE LATE JOHN FOTHERGILL M.D. F.R.S. EXTRACTED FROM A MEMOIR, BY DR. LETSOM. READ BEFORE THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

JOHN Fothergill, the father of the deceased physician of the same name, was born in Wensleydale, in Yorkshire, in the year 1676, and was a member of the religious society now generally denominated quakers. He resided at Carr-end, the family estate of a preceding generation, where Dr. John Fothergill was born, on the eighth of March 1712; he was one of many children; though not the only one, who in early life exhibited instances of genius and superior understanding.

About his sixteenth year, when his school education was finished, he was placed with Benjamin Bartlett, an eminent apothecary at Bradford in Yorkshire; whose amiable manners and exemplary conduct had conferred upon him the character of a good man, whilst his medical abilities and instructions had rendered his house the seminary of many distinguished physicians.

The youth, who was destined at a future time, to become one of the first physicians of the age, soon afforded such instances of superior sagacity, as induced his intelligent master to permit him, at an early period, to visit and prescribe for his patients; and this he did with so much approbation, that his contemporaries in that neighbourhood have always spoken, in terms of respectful recollection, of his assiduity and practical success.

When his apprenticeship expired, he removed to Edinburgh, to study physic at the colleges of medicine, prior to his settling in the country as an apothecary, in which capacity he was originally designed to act.—At this time the professorial chairs were filled with the doctors Monro, Alston, Rutherfoord, Sinclair, and Plummer, all of whom had issued from the Boerhaavian school.

The first of these professors, that great anatomical oracle, Monro, attended to his numerous pupils with so much sedulous care, as justly denominated him the father of the college; and no man knew better how to discriminate the genius of his pupils. Dr. Fothergill early caught his attention, in whom he discovered such powers of mind, as promised the most fertile expansion in maturity, and induced the venerable master to urge his pupil to enlarge their cultivation by a longer residence at the university than was at first proposed. He that is born with genius, and an inclination to attempt great things, is generally endowed with vigour of mind to perform them:

—Possunt, quia posse videntur.*
VIRGIL.

Great natural powers, however are often combined with great diffidence, which was certainly the situation of Dr. Fothergill at this time, who has often told me, that his opinion of his own abilities was such as reconciled his mind to move in a more subordinate sphere. It may therefore be primarily attributed to the discernment of this eminent professor, that his pupil was at once destined to occupy a higher station, to redeem apparent victims of disease by his skill; and he survived long enough to see that he had not made a false estimate of his genius, while his industry of application, and ardour after instruction, tended to confirm the professor's sagacity; for as he advanced in knowledge, he found daily excitements to further progress.

At this period some of the professors delivered lectures in Latin, and others in English. Dr. Fothergill adopted a method of improving upon both, which it may not be improper to mention here. He took notes of the heads of each lecture, and on his return to his lodgings, he translated those into Latin which had been given in English, and then carefully consulted and compared the opinions both of the ancients and moderns upon the subject of the lectures, with the lectures themselves; after which he added such remarks on each, as

* For they can conquer, who believe they can. DRYDEN.

his reading and reflection furnished: by this means he gained a knowledge of the ancients, as well as the moderns; he enlarged his ideas, and acquired the early habit of examining opinions, and discriminating between those merely speculative, and those which resulted from fact and experiment; in a word, he hereby necessarily acquired new powers of reflection, and an increased energy of judgment.

A mode, not dissimilar, he followed in his studies: when any medical case occurred worthy of remark, and there are few cases but to a student of medicine are important, he examined various authorities upon the same subject, and from these combined means drew a comparative result.

We see not unfrequently ingenious youths, diverted by the ardour of imagination into irregularities, which length of time, and the strength of mature reason, with difficulty correct; but in the present subject of biography, we search in vain for the season of youthful indulgence: as he adopted by his conduct, so he claimed an hereditary portion of his father's virtues, and has left us to judge of his youth, by numbering his years, rather than by recounting his pursuits.

It was in the year 1736 that he graduated at Edinburgh, and printed his Thesis "de Emeticorum usu;" soon after which he came to London, and attended the practice of St. Thomas's hospital. Here he was at once furnished with the most ample opportunies of examining the doctrines of the schools, by a series of facts drawn from disease and dissection.

Objects of poverty have all those feelings alive, that can rightly estimate the assiduity and the sympathy of those to whom they look up for succour; they are equally jealous of apparent neglect, and grateful of seeming tenderness; and however unremitting the diligence of the Doctor might have been, his humanity to the poor was still more conspicuous to them: to be diligent was his interest, to be humane was the spontaneous effusion of a good heart: this the patients saw and felt; and when he left the hospital, he soon experienced the pleasing confirmation of their decision.

However dark some may represent the propensities of mankind, ample knowledge of the poor has confirmed me in an opinion, that they are less inclinable to complain of injuries, than to acknowledge obligations: private injuries affect individuals, and mankind are more addicted to hearken to the relation of general good, than partial evil; and his humanity having become a subject of discussion to the miserable tenants of a sick ward, such as were discharged, not quite restored to health, found the way to the house of this amiable physician. Comfort of mind is a powerful restorative to a weakened constitution, and he who divides our miseries by his sympathy, proportionally adds to our consolation. Change of air, doubtless, contributes much to restore the fibre that has been debilitated by grief, penury, and sickness; and the same gratitude which impels the mind to dwell on virtuous rather than on vicious actions, would determine the eye of gratitude to him, who last saw us emerge from misery; to him, is attributed all the merits of his predecessors, as the artist who casts the metal is less valued than he who polishes its surface.

It is however, certain, that the poor who applied to him for relief, were loud in proclaiming the success of his practice, and gradually raised him to more lucrative employment. Dr. Fothergill himself has often mentioned how much he was indebted to this class of grateful though pennyless supplicants; and in his turn he acknowledged the obligation, by humanely continuing to give advice gratis to the poor, as long as he lived, long after their suffrages could tend to elevate his reputation: his persevering benevolence could then alone be actuated by the innate goodness of his heart.

After an excursion on the continent, he returned to London, and took up his residence in Gracechurch-street; we may therefore date the commencement of his practice in the year 1740, for though he graduated in 1736, the intermediate time was chiefly employed in attending the hospitals, and laying that foundation, upon which was afterwards to be raised a distinguished superstructure.

Nothing hurt his feelings more, than estimating the profession of physic by its lucrative advantages; the art of healing, he considered in that sacred point of view, which connected it with a conscientious principle of action. "My only wish," he declares, "was to do what little business might fall to my share, as well as possible; and to banish all thoughts of practising physic as a money-getting trade, with the same solicitude, as I would the suggestions of vice or intemperance." And when the success of his practice had raised him to the summit of reputation and emolument, he seemed actuated by the same sentiment: "I endeavour," says this conscientious physician, to follow my business, because it is my duty rather than my interest; the last is inseparable from a just discharge of duty, but I have ever wished to look at the profits in the last place, and this wish has attended me ever since my beginning."

If this language is foreign to the man of the world, it is at least worthy of a man of principle; and no physician will be worse for its perusal or imitation, nor of what he afterwards communicated upon the same subject. "I wished at my first setting out," he observes, "I wished most fervently, and I endeavour after it still, to do the business that occurred, with all the diligence I could, as a *present duty*, and endeavoured to repress every rising idea of its consequences; knowing most assuredly that there was a hand, which could easily overthrow every pursuit of this kind, and baffle every attempt, either to acquire fame or wealth.—And with a great degree of gratitude, I look back to the gracious secret preserver, that kept my mind more attentive to the discharge of my present anxious care for those I visited, than either to the profits or the credit resulting from it: and I am sure, to be kept under such a circumscribed unaspiring temper of mind, doing every thing with diligence, humility, and as in the sight of the God of healing, frees the mind from much unavailing distress, and consequential disappointment."

Highly flattering as his success must have been, at this early period, it bore very little proportion to that blaze of character which succeeded his "Account of the Sore Throat attended with Ulcers," published in 1748, and since deservedly translated into every European language. Not long before this time, the disease which he now elucidated, in its general havock in London, had swept away indiscriminately, the hopes of some noble families, and particularly the two sons of the late Henry Pelham, brother to the late duke of Newcastle, and had hence excited very general alarm; the discovery therefore of a new and successful treatment of so formidable and fatal a disease, was critically fortunate for the public, as well as for the author. Medical essays which promise improvements in the art of healing, are usually offered to the public in a state of imperfection, as long and repeated experiment is requisite to mature the offspring of a luxuriant genius; but this performance was exempted from the imbecility of a hasty birth, and the revolution it produced in the treatment of this disease, has obtained the sanction of the ablest physicians from that period to the present time, with less deviation perhaps than has attended the management of any other acute disorder.

Although a natural bias for experiment, does not now appear in many instances of his chemical investigations, yet it obviously pervaded the whole composition of his prescriptions. It is well known, that the mere exterior surface of bodies is no criterion of their component parts, when analyzed by chemical processes: the most simple and innocent articles used in diet, consist of parts, which developed and separated, become highly corrosive; culinary salt, applied to so many useful and dietetic purposes, contains as well as nitre and common sulphur, an acid, which is destructive to the hardest substances: other combinations may be formed, of bodies inoffensive and inert in their distinct states, which on union, become noxious to animal life. Chemistry is hence absolutely requisite to form a physician, who must have daily reference to it in

his practice: yet in this department of medicine, physicians are not unfrequently deficient; by which compositions have been recommended, and from thence combinations have resulted, which the prescriber neither proposed nor suspected. This was not the fate of Dr. Fothergill; there was such a well-directed selection in all his compositions, as happily united simplicity, elegance, and utility; and as the influence of his practice extended, his mode of prescription was proportionally imitated in the metropolis, and at length so generally adopted, that he principally contributed to bring about a revolution, that substituted elegant simplicity in the place of multifarious and discordant compound.

Materia Medica is that department of medicine most immediately allied to natural history, and to which he had devoted no little attention; having collected a cabinet of materia medica, seldom, if ever, exceeded for its extent or selection. He had even encouraged the idea of delivering lectures upon this entertaining and useful branch of medicine; but an increase of employment, joined with a diffidence of his own abilities, which none but himself entertained, diverted him from this intention; and his valuable collection was generously presented to the college of Edinburgh, for the use of the public professor of Materia Medica in that university. The handmaid to this branch of medicine is Botany, a department of natural history, which affords the greatest instruction and recreation with the least exercise of the mind: it is, therefore, well adapted to the pursuit of a medical man, whose moments of seclusion are rather snatched from time by watchful diligence, than enjoyed from actual leisure.

As a rational means of unbending his mind, and affording at the same time collateral advancement in the healing art, botany acquired his patronage. On the Surrey side of the Thames he had noticed a spot of land, the situation of which sheltered it from the severity of the north wind, and in the soil of which vegetables grew luxuriantly; its vicinity was convenient, and its extent rendered its purchase easy, as the proprietor was inclined to sell it: the price was stipulated, and one obstacle alone remained to make it his own; it was let to a tenant at will, whose little family subsisted on its produce, and whose misery was inevitable, had he expelled him from this fruitful soil: the moment he was made acquainted with the circumstances of the family, he refused the offer, adding, "that that could never afford gratification to him, which entailed misery on another;" and when he relinquished this projected Eden, he made the family a present of the intended purchase money.

Not far distant from this admired spot, he had afterwards a garden, which he occasionally visited; but he never furnished it with that profusion of exotics which he since collected from every quarter of the globe, and introduced into his garden at Upton, near Stratford. The walls of the garden inclosed above five acres of land; a winding canal, in the figure of a crescent, nearly formed it into two divisions, and opened occasionally on the sight, through the branches of rare and exotic shrubs, that lined the walks on its banks. In the midst of winter, when the earth was covered with snow, evergreens were clothed in full verdure: without exposure to the open air, a glass door from the mansion-house gave entrance into a suite of hot and green-house apartments of nearly 260 feet extent, containing upwards of 3,400 distinct species of exotics, whose foliage wore perpetual verdure, and formed a beautiful and striking contrast to the shrivelled natives of colder regions. In the open ground, with the returning summer, about 3,000 distinct species of plants and shrubs vied in verdure with the natives of Asia and Africa. It was in this spot that a perpetual spring was realized, where the elegant proprietor sometimes retired for a few hours to contemplate the vegetable productions of the four quarters of the globe united within his domain; where the spheres seemed transposed, and the arctic circle to be joined to the equator.*

* The president of the Royal Society.

But in the midst of this enchanting combination of nature, he never lost sight of the *cui bono:* "in these, as in every other pursuit, he had always in view, the enlargement and elevation of his own heart; having formed early habitudes of religious reference, from the display of divine power and wisdom in the beauty, the order, and the harmony of external things, to the glory of their Almighty Formed From the influences of these habitudes, his mind was always preserved in a disengaged and independent state, enjoying, but yet adoring."

A man of science, confined by a local profession, like the practice of physic, which occupies the most precious moments of time, may suggest more to others, than he can himself have an opportunity to effect; but like the genial rays of the sun, his influence may extend to the most remote regions of the globe: and thus it was that Dr. Fothergill promoted the investigation of nature, and excited inquiries after her curious productions, as far as navigation and commerce had diffused arts and sciences. Men of more genius than fortune found in him a liberal patron; he contributed to support them while they explored distant regions, and amply rewarded their discoveries. As he studied most departments of natural history, as he patronized its ingenious cultivators, he necessarily became possessed of a valuable collection of its rare objects: next to the Duchess of Portland, he had the best cabinet of shells in the kingdom; his collection of ores and minerals, dug out of different parts of the earth, were distinguished for their rarity rather than for their number. Of reptiles and animals, the gratitude of those he had patronized furnished him with a curious variety: in the same manner he became possessed of an elegant cabinet of insects, which was greatly enlarged by the exertions of the ingenious Smeathman. His corals, from whence Ellis, that indefatigable

---

who has circumnavigated the globe, and is acquainted with most of the gardens in Europe, speaks of Dr. Fothergill's in the following manner.

"At an expense seldom undertaken by an individual, and with an ardour that was visible in the whole of his conduct, he procured from all parts of the world a great number of the rarest plants, and protected them in the amplest buildings which this or any other country has seen. He liberally proposed rewards to those, whose circumstances and situations in life, gave them opportunities of bringing hither plants which might be ornamental, and probably useful to this country, or her colonies; and as liberally paid these rewards to all that served him. If the troubles of war had permitted, we should have the Cortex Wintermanus, &c. introduced by his means into this country; and also the Bread-fruit, Mangesteen, &c. into the West Indies. For each of these and many others, he had fixed a proper premium. In conjunction with the Earl of Tankerville, Dr. Pitcairn, and myself, he sent over a person to Africa, who is still employed upon the coast of that country, for the purpose of collecting plants and specimens.

"Those whose gratitude for restored health prompted them to do what was acceptable to their benefactor, were always informed by him that presents of rare plants chiefly attracted his attention, and would be more acceptable to him than the most generous fees. How many unhappy men, enervated by the effects of hot climates, where their connections had placed them, found health on their return home, at that cheap purchase!

"What an infinite number of plants he obtained by these means, the large collection of drawings he left behind will amply testify; and that they were equalled by nothing but royal munificence, at this time largely bestowed upon the botanic gardens at Kew. In my opinion no other garden in Europe, royal, or of a subject, had nearly so many scarce and valuable plants.

"That science might not suffer a loss, when a plant he had cultivated should die, he liberally paid the best artist the country afforded to draw the new ones as they came to perfection; and so numerous were they at last, that he found it necessary to employ more artists than one, in order to keep pace with their increase.—His garden was known all over Europe, and foreigners of all ranks asked, when they came hither, permission to see it; of which Dr. Solander and myself are sufficient witnesses, from the many applications that have been made through us for that permission."

Sir Joseph Banks' note in Dr. Thompson's Memoirs of Dr. Fothergill, p. 37.

and microscopical naturalist, delineated his system, and created a new species of animal beings, was the foremost in Europe. Those objects of nature, which were too bulky to transport, or too perishable to preserve, he ordered to be delineated by the pencil of artists, that he might give bread to a set of ingenious men, whom he wished to partake of his beneficence, whilst he rationally gratified his own taste, and enlarged the boundaries of the knowledge of nature: of such elegant specimens, whose value it is difficult to estimate, he did not possess less than twelve hundred; and his collection of English heads, which included those purchased of the late John Nicholls, formed a treasure in this particular department, which was perhaps inferior to none.

To be Continued.

USEFUL INVENTIONS.

Receipt to make Cyder.

AFTER the Apples are bruised and pressed in the usual manner, the juice should be immediately put into large open vessels and suffered to remain in this situation from 24 to 48 hours in order to deposit any crude matter which may have passed through the bag, and also to throw up the lighter particles in the form of scum, which should be carefully removed; the liquor is then to be drawn off and passed through a double flannel bag, removing the feculent matter by occasionally turning and rinsing it. When thus prepared, put two or three gallons into a strong well bound cask, in which matches (made by dipping linen rags in melted sulphur) are to be lighted and suspended from the bung hole by means of Iron Wire, and the bung lightly put in, fresh portions of match must be added until they cease to burn on their being introduced into the cask, which should now be violently agitated for the purpose of assisting the absorption of the sulphurous gas. After standing a quarter of an hour, draw it off into a tub, the cock and bung being left open that the light unabsorbed gas may be suffered to escape; after remaining in this situation for about 15 or 20 minutes, the operation must be repeated five or six times with a like quantity of fresh liquor each time; return the different portions into the cask, and fill it up with the filtered liquor, put a quart of spirits to every 40 gallons, and insert the bung in the closest and firmest manner so as to preclude the possibility of the internal air forcing a passage, should it be disposed to ferment. In six months it will be fit for bottling; the corks must be wired down and laid on the side in bins.

Rationale. Sulphurous acid which is formed by burning sulphur in confined portions of atmospheric air, has the well known property of checking fermentation, so that if the fresh juices of fruit be impregnated with this acid, it causes a suspension of the vinous fermentation until sufficient time is afforded for the fining of the liquor, which on its being bottled, gradually ferments, and causes it to assume the fine sparkling appearance met with in English Cyder. In the common sour Cyder the fermentation has proceeded through the vinous to the acetous, and consequently in a state nearly approaching to vinegar. In the mode usually practised in making Cyder in imitation of English, the fresh juice is at first put into the cask, and the whole drawn off when it shews signs of fermenting, the casks stoved with sulphur match, and the liquor immediately returned: racking off and stoving until it ceases to exhibit a disposition to ferment, which tedious process usually takes about six weeks, but which may be advantageously shortened by the substitution of sulphur matches in larger proportions as before directed, so as to impregnate the liquor with sulphurous gas.